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LETTER DATED 6 OCTOBER 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF LIBERIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to present my compliments and, upon the instructions of my Government, to inform that on Sunday, 3 October 1999, a delegation headed by Corporal Foday Sankoh, leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Sierra Leone, and Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Paul Koroma of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) left Monrovia and arrived in Freetown on the same day. They were accompanied by representatives of the Governments of Liberia, Nigeria, Togo and the United States of America, and representatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations.

Their departure from Monrovia was preceded by internal consultations among the leaders of RUF and AFRC, facilitated by the President of Liberia, His Excellency Dr. Charles G. Taylor, which were intended to overcome impediments to the implementation of the Lomé peace agreement. The presence of the RUF and AFRC leaders in Freetown will undoubtedly move the Sierra Leonean peace process forward.

The Government of Liberia remains committed to ensuring the successful implementation of the Lomé peace agreement.

Attached herewith are copies of the statements issued by President Taylor, RUF and AFRC.

I would be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Neh DUKULY-TOLBERT
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex I

Statement issued at Monrovia, on 2 October 1999, by the Alliance of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council on the occasion of the return of the leadership of the Alliance for Peace to Freetown, facilitated by His Excellency, President Charles Ghankay Taylor on behalf of the Authority of the Economic Community of West African States

We, the leadership and the joint high command of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)/Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) alliance, express on behalf of the peace-loving people of Sierra Leone, our profound gratitude and appreciation to His Excellency Charles Ghankay Taylor, his Government and the courageous people of Liberia, for the sacrifices that they continue to make to the consolidation of peace in Sierra Leone.

We take this opportunity to thank the Heads of State, Government and people of the member States of the Economic Community of West African States and the Chairman, His Excellency President Gnassingbe Eyadema of the Republic of Togo, for standing by the people of Sierra Leone throughout the crisis.

We remind ourselves also of the monumental contribution of His Excellency President Henri Konan Bedie, the Government and people of Côte d'Ivoire to the cause of lasting peace in Sierra Leone and in the subregion.

We also hereby express our appreciation for the distinctive role of the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the European Union and the Commonwealth.

We thank the non-governmental organizations and civil society groups who have kept the people alive and the flame of democracy, good governance, accountability and transparency burning in all our hearts.

When we pause and reflect, we can only see that we are not alone in our struggle to create a new Sierra Leone of equal opportunity, freedom and justice for all. There is a great deal of goodwill towards Sierra Leone in so far as our focus is on peace, national reconciliation and development. The courageous people of Liberia, through their President, have demonstrated this goodwill towards us and we shall never fail them in our commitment to peace. We do agree with His Excellency President Charles Ghankay Taylor that there can be no peace in Liberia when there is no peace in Sierra Leone.

There has been a great deal of concern expressed in Sierra Leone and within the international community about the alleged split in the RUF/AFRC alliance. Truly, we experienced from internal problems but these have been put behind us with the timely intervention of His Excellency President Charles Ghankay Taylor, supported ably by his brother Heads of State of the ECOWAS Authority. It is important for us to express the fact that we took notice of the concern that our internal problems could threaten the cause of peace consolidation in Sierra Leone. We would like to thank the people of Sierra Leone and members of the

international community for their concern and their wish for our alliance to hold in the supreme interest of peace.

The people of Sierra Leone know that RUF and AFRC came together to end the war. The people of Sierra Leone know that our alliance is for peace. We are happy to proclaim on this second day of October 1999 that our alliance for peace is strong for, we know that, when you are strong nothing will be wrong.

We are going to Freetown to help consolidate the peace and contribute to the transformation of our society.

Once again, we thank the courageous people of Liberia and the member States of ECOWAS and their leaders for facilitating this historic encounter between the leaders of the RUF/AFRC alliance and their eventual return to Freetown in the cause of peace and stability in the Mano River Union and in the West African subregion.

Long live the courageous people of Liberia!

Long live the noble ideals of the Mano River Union and the Economic Community of West African States!

Long live the United Nations!

Long live the Organization of African Unity!

Long live the European Union!

Long live the Commonwealth!

Long live the community of non-governmental organizations!

Long live civil society groups!

Long live the alliance for peace!

Long live the peace-loving people of Sierra Leone!

Our gratitude and praise to the Almighty Allah/God and our glorious ancestors.

Annex II

Statement issued in Monrovia, on 2 October 1999, by His Excellency Dahkpannah Dr. Charles Ghankay Taylor, President of the Republic of Liberia, at the conclusion of reconciliatory talks with Corporal Foday Sankoh, Chairman, Revolutionary United Front, and Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Paul Koroma, Leader, Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, on the implementation of the Sierra Leonean peace agreement

Today the prospects for peace in the Republic of Sierra Leone are self-evident by the presence of Corporal Foday Sankoh of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Paul Koroma of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) in Monrovia, as they prepare for their historic return to Sierra Leone.

The Government of Liberia which, along with the leadership of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), brokered the peace process, is also serving as the intermediary to facilitate the early return of Corporal Sankoh and Lieutenant Colonel Koroma to Freetown to help implement the Sierra Leonean peace plan.

We commend ECOWAS leaders for their sacrificial support and the endurance they have shown in restoring peace in Sierra Leone. We particularly laud the efforts of President Olusegun Obasanjo of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for his dynamism in helping to give the subregion a new sense of direction, for peace and stability. Special note is made of the thirty-ninth anniversary of the independence of Nigeria and we express our best wishes for the peace, progress and prosperity of the people of that great nation.

We applaud the President of Togo and Chairman of ECOWAS, Mr. Gnassingbe Eyadema, as well as the ECOWAS secretariat, for the steady leadership in hosting and directing the negotiations that brought about the Lomé peace agreement for Sierra Leone.

We make particular mention of other leaders in the subregion with whom we have interacted over the past several days to realize success in these reconciliatory talks. The President of Burkina Faso, Mr. Blaise Compaore, the President of Sierra Leone, Mr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, the Ambassador of the United States of America to Liberia, Mr. Bismark Myrick, our special negotiator, the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mrs. D. Musuleng Cooper, and the officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, all deserve favourable mention for their tireless efforts.

Our special thanks go to the wonderful people of Liberia, the Legislature and all those involved with these talks for their hospitality, brotherliness and understanding. Our people have always been a warm and caring people. They can be proud that, once again, Liberia has served as a stage for peace and progress among the comity of nations.

From the onset of the Sierra Leonean civil war, Liberia has believed in constructive engagement for the resolution of the conflict. What we have tried to do in the past few days by hosting these meetings is to provide an atmosphere for stabilizing and maintaining the momentum of the peace process in Sierra Leone by sharing our experience in conflict resolution.

We have endeavoured to ensure that Sierra Leone benefit from the hindsight of our own process that brought peace to Liberia and ushered in a new democratic order. This is what we are pursuing to ensure the perpetuity of good neighbourliness. We believe that the last chapter in Sierra Leone's bitter crisis is at its terminal point, which will bring durable and lasting peace for our brothers and sisters. We realize, however, that final peace rests with Sierra Leoneans themselves. They must develop the courage to forgive and forget.

Our contribution has thus been based on the strength of our conviction that we are one people with a common destiny: that there cannot be peace and progress in Liberia without corresponding peace and progress in Sierra Leone.

The Lomé peace agreement signed on 7 July 1999 must be fully implemented to ensure the smooth transition envisaged by the peace-loving leaders of ECOWAS.

The strengthening of relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia benefits the Mano River Union and also the subregion. The potential for the Mano River Union to be the engine of our progress and development in the subregion is untapped. Our rich flora and fauna, marine life, mineral wealth and human potential is unparalleled, and this God-given untapped wealth can best be developed not by a single country but by our Mano River Union. This is what peace in Sierra Leone means to Liberia. The Mano River unites us.

We see peace in Sierra Leone and the strengthening of the Mano River Union as an important contribution to the speeding up of the integration of the economies of the rest of the subregion. Every action we have taken has been done in the supreme interest of ECOWAS. We have an opportunity to integrate and synchronize our national planning and development objectives, in particular in the areas of telecommunications, energy, roads and transport, banking, insurance, health, education and mining.

We have the opportunity now to integrate our socio-economic systems in keeping with the noble objectives of the ECOWAS treaty. The socio-economic unification will naturally lead to political integration. Nothing prevents us now from thinking about and planning towards a Mano River Union parliament. The legislative contacts being advanced now should be speeded up in the light of the continental parliament mandated by the declaration issued at Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, in September 1999.

At present, the Government of Liberia is contemplating reopening the Liberian-Sierra Leonean border and working collectively for the revitalization of the Mano River Union. In this light, we look forward with great anticipation to attending the Mano River Union summit meeting scheduled to be held in Freetown in early November. Meanwhile, we will continue to constructively

engage the Government of Guinea in solidifying our relations, because our three countries are inextricably yoked by the Mano River Union heritage.

We believe when our relations are in full bloom, our problems of security, reconstruction and development will gain added impetus. It will reinforce our efforts at confidence-building and the normalization of relations between our two nations.

We close this statement with optimism. This subregion is now on the road to peace and progress and no one will be permitted to derail our noble journey.

As our brothers return to their native land, we wish them Godspeed and success in their endeavours. To ensure solidarity on this historic occasion, I have selected a high-level delegation headed by the President pro tempore of the Liberian Senate, the Honourable Kakura B. Kpoto, to accompany Messrs. Sankoh and Koroma to Freetown. They are being joined by the Minister of Overseas Cooperation of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Professor Jerry Gana, Minister of Defence of Togo, the United States Ambassador to Liberia, and representatives of the United Nations and ECOWAS. A ten-member press team has also been approved to accompany the delegation.

In union strong, success is sure. May God continue to bless the work of our hands and save the State.

Annex III

Statement issued at Monrovia, on 2 October 1999, by Lieutenant Colonel Johnny Paul Koroma, Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council

It is with great relief and joy that we are able to announce to our people in Sierra Leone, especially, the West African subregion and the world at large, that, under the auspices of His Excellency President Charles Taylor of Liberia, the Honourable Foday Sankoh and myself have had a very successful two-day meeting, at which we were able to clear up any misunderstanding or disagreement that would impede the ongoing peace process that started with the signing of the Lomé peace agreement on 7 July 1999.

The success of this meeting has greatly strengthened the alliance between the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Sierra Leone. We firmly believe that this alliance is not only very good but also very necessary for our people and peace in Sierra Leone. We are now agreed that enough time has been wasted and it is high time that we returned home and put this process on the road.

Before I conclude this statement, I wish to make two appeals. The first one is to the members of the press, especially the international press, who are quick to read danger in any small delay or hiccup in the process; this is a major danger to the peace process or can cause a very serious disagreement between the AFRC/RUF alliance. This kind of speculative journalism unnerves our people who have greatly suffered from almost a decade of war.

To our people, we say that we understand their impatience to see us disarm and demobilize so that normalcy can return to our country, Sierra Leone. We, however, appeal to them to be patient and give us time to handle this process with the great care it needs. It will take time, probably more time than was anticipated at the time of the signing of the agreement. But, by the grace of God/Allah, we will eventually get to the Promised Land. One welcome assurance I wish to give to our people, and the world at large is that the Honourable Foday Saybana Sankoh and myself have agreed that there will be no more war in Sierra Leone. The "war, war" is now over and it is now the time to "jaw, jaw". In this, we hope and believe that we understand the views of President Kabbah and his people and that we have the total support of the international community.

We will end this statement by expressing profound gratitude and thanks to President Charles Taylor and the good people of Liberia who have been patient, helpful and encouraging in helping us to take one faltering step after the other along the long road to peace. We say to them, "Thank you and God Bless".